1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

Even if there were stronger interest in sex than seemed to exist, there would be little opportunity for the youngsters to indulge in any sexual relations, since their playmates tend to be parallel cousins and very often playmates are lacking altogether. In the small hunting groups often there may be only one or two unmarried young people. Under such conditions a boy would either have to seek sex relations with one of his moiety sisters or practice adultery with a woman of the opposite moiety living with his own hunting group. We may presume that neither incest nor adultery are unknown to the Yaruros. During my stay among them there was no evidence of that.

Another factor which tends to help [illegible] Yaruros live a strictly moral life is that upon reaching puberty both boys and girls marry if a mate is available, even though the wife or husband may be considerably older. Premarital romantic love life may be entirely absent on this account, but one suspects that another type of romanticism may be built on what is available. For instance, practically from babyhood the boy or girl knows whom he or she will marry and in waiting for the promised day one would suspect an emotional attitude is built up. It is certain that after marriage strong bonds of affection are developed between husband and wife. Strictly limited in choice, there can be no free play for one's desires.

In the Yaruro society prostitution is probably absent. I believe that today some degree of prostitution has been forced upon them by the peoples with whom they come in contact. Perhaps we should call it purchasing of sexual rights, with the Yaruros playing a docile if not hostile part. After all, they are forced to acquiesce in a great many practices foreign to their ideas.

The above is the sexual ambient. As a result the adults act in the following manner. Sexual intercourse is considered one of the numerous natural acts. It is not exaggerated, little talked or joked about, and judging from the sort of life they lead not over indulged in.

Among the men, woman is not discussed. Neither virtue nor sin is the subject of comment. She is let strictly alone and uncensored. Obscenity is rare.

If any homosexuality exists it must be established by inference. It is common among the hunting tribes for a man to have a companion with whom he hunts, travels, and with whom he spends most of his time. Such companionship seems to be closer before marriage than after.

I have observed two boys, unmarried because no girls were available, engaged in such acts as we are accustomed to impute to love making—holding hands, etc. Yet, lest we jump at hasty conclusions, it must be said that affection between men is demonstrated much more so than